

IV. HUMAN SERVICE NEEDS

The issue of how to determine "needs" can be a difficult one, often involving a collection of factual information combined with subjective judgments by key leadership.

While new research may be necessary to find definitive answers to the questions of priority needs for a community, looking first at what is already available may answer some of the questions and point the way to at least the broader areas of need. Combining those facts with our own knowledge of our community can then provide the potential targets for our new efforts to meet needs of Tempe citizens.

A. City Of Tempe Satisfaction Survey

The City of Tempe periodically contracts for a random telephone survey of Tempe residents concerning their satisfaction with City services and need priorities. The 2000 survey of 600 Tempe residents was conducted by Dr. Bruce D. Merrill, Professor of Mass Communication and Director of the Media Research Program in the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Telecommunication at Arizona State University.

Following are selected portions of the 1/4/01 report from Dr. Merrill (emphasis added) (source, City of Tempe website):

"1. What do you feel is the single most important problem or issue facing the City of Tempe that the City Council should be trying to do something about? ASK OPEN ENDED AND CODE BELOW.

	1998	2000
1. Traffic, need for roads, freeways	21%	21%
2. Crime, violence, theft, more police, gangs, drug	16	8
3. Education related: funding, better schools, teachers, etc	9	8
4. Growth related: planning, zoning, etc	8	11
5. Need for more or better mass transit	4	4
6. Help street people, poor, homeless, shelters	4	3
7. High taxes	3	3
8. Environmental concerns: air, water, noise pollution	2	2
9. More youth programs	1	<1
10. Too many apartments, run down apartments	1	<1....
2000 survey "other" comments. Numbers in parentheses are the number of mentions:		
... need more for youth to do (3);... more diverse, affordable housing downtown (2); "		

Responses from the 1999 Satisfaction Survey, also conducted by Dr. Merrill, showed the following concerning whether respondents thought the City should spend more, the same or less on these items (emphasis added):

SPENDING PRIORITIES (1999 City of Tempe Satisfaction Survey)			
Item	More	Same	Less
Relieve traffic congestion	71%	28%	1%
Police services	67	30	3
Environmental protection	58	38	3
Bicycle and pedestrian paths	55	39	6
After school programs	51	48	1
Youth services	47	53	1
Pre-school programs	41	53	6
Development of Rio Salado	40	43	16
Local bus service	40	56	4
Street Repairs	39	58	3
Street lighting	36	61	3
Paramedic services	30	69	1
Parks and playgrounds	30	68	2
Fire services	28	71	1
Libraries	25	74	1
Recycling program	24	72	5
Senior citizen programs	22	75	3
Cultural Activities	22	70	8
Public art	16	50	34
Historical preservation	16	76	9
Redevelopment of downtown	15	72	13
Trash collection	9	90	1

B. Needs by Target Groups

As explained above in Section I, The People Improvement Plan will address needs on a phased basis for *five target groups*. During the study of each target group by citizen task forces, a comprehensive review of the needs of that particular target group is addressed. Following is a table that shows the target groups and their numbers in Tempe.

Target Group	Numbers in Tempe
Homeless	Exact numbers unknown and population varies by the season - 575 were counted in the 1995 Census. Other estimates range from 600 - 800 in Tempe.
Aging	17,736 age 60+, 2000 Census (10% of the total Tempe population).
Disability	22,308 in 2000 (15% of the total Tempe population).
Children & Youth	31,481 people under age 18, 2000 Census (20% of the Tempe total population)
Adults & Families	127,141 Adults age 18 and over (80% of the population) ; 33,654 family households (53% of the total, average size, 3.05 people) - 2000 Census

There is some overlap among these groups, but the experience gained during the agency review group tells us the issues tend to fall out along these lines. In addressing the issues and needs for the group, it is not assumed that we are “starting from scratch” – much is being done in Tempe on all of them. Nor does it mean that we should necessarily shift resources from what is being done in other areas of need to fund new or expanded services in the targeted areas – that might be compared to taking material away from a building’s foundation to add a second story to it, thus weakening the overall structure because of the new addition.

Also, the City is not necessarily responsible for funding all unmet needs, yet it is in our interest to monitor needs being addressed by others because the success of those other efforts affect the people of Tempe. An example is the understanding gained by the Homeless Task Force (see below) that a great many of the single homeless adults on our streets have serious drug and alcohol problems, services for which are provided by the behavioral health system of public and private services. The City does fund non-profit services that are helping in this area but most behavioral health services are to be provided through state and county entities. The understanding of the Task Force that such services are lacking in many respects led to the Task Force recommendation that, “The City should actively become involved in advocating for more funds in general and for increased services in Tempe through regional collaborative efforts.”

Following is some information on each of these five target groups to illustrate needs and trends. This information is a start toward addressing the issues and needs for these groups, to be followed up by a comprehensive review by the study task forces for each group.

1. Homeless Needs—The subject of homeless needs and what to do about them in Tempe was the subject of a year-long study process through the Homeless Task Force, which constituted Phase I of the People Improvement Plan for Tempe. The reader is referred to the full report of the task force for more detail on needs of homeless and recommendations about what to do about those needs (the report is available on-line at www.tempe.gov/tcc).

“Who are the homeless?”

- ◆ *He or she is a single older person (more likely to be male) who is likely to have problems with alcohol/drug abuse, mental illness, or both.*



80% of the people using Central AZ Shelter Services are men.

55% of people in shelter in Maricopa County are adults without children.

63% of adults in shelter have alcohol/drug abuse problems.

9% of adults in shelter in Maricopa County are seriously mentally ill.

10% of adults in shelter in Maricopa County have substance abuse problems **and** are seriously mentally ill.

- ◆ *He or she is in a family.*

29% of those in shelter in Maricopa County are children.

16% of adults in shelter in Maricopa County are members of families with children.

- ◆ *She is a mother fleeing a domestic violence situation, often with her children.*

15% of those in shelter in Maricopa County were there because of domestic violence.

He or she has HIV/AIDS.

3% of those in shelter in Maricopa County are diagnosed with HIV/AIDS.

Who are the homeless—continued

- ◆ *He or she is an unaccompanied youth who probably isn't in shelter.*
<1% of those in shelter in Maricopa County are unaccompanied youth.
- ◆ *He or she is likely to be an ethnic minority*
52 – 56% of those in shelter are non-white.

How many homeless are there? The answer is not known with certainty.

Figures from the 1995 Census present some of the “harder” data because an effort was made then to count the homeless. However, that count represented a “snapshot” taken over five years ago which may well not represent the current situation.

- ◆ Of the 2,568 total homeless persons found in the East Valley in 1995, 575 or 22% were in Tempe (*see chart below*).
- ◆ Most of Tempe's 1995 homeless were *women* - 356 or 62%. This is in contrast to the rest of the county where men made up 70% of the 1995 identified homeless population.
- ◆ Tempe's proportion of the East Valley homeless in 1995 was *basically the same as its proportion of the total population*, i.e., Tempe had 22% of the East Valley population (153,821 vs. 688,155) and 22% of its homeless.
- ◆ Ages of Tempe Homeless in 1995:

<u>0-17</u>	<u>18-34</u>	<u>55-74</u>	<u>75+</u>
1.39%	95.13%	3.30%	0.17%

Recent Estimates on Numbers of Homeless

- Maricopa County (State Homeless Coordinator)
Low: 10,000
High: 12,000
- Maricopa County (estimates from HUD Continuum of Care)
9,047

Estimated numbers of Tempe Street Homeless - *Tempe Police*: About 200-300 homeless on Tempe streets from October through April, lessening to *around 50* during hot months.

Populations of concern – task force members learned about the importance of including a range of people in our concerns about homelessness:

People on the streets – people most of us probably think of when the word “homeless” is mentioned. They are, of course, those in most immediate need of help.

People in shelter or transitional programs – it is important to consider those who were homeless and are presently residing in emergency or transitional shelter. Simply put, if the care they receive does not meet the need, many will be back on the streets again.

People at-risk of becoming homeless – many people are a “paycheck away” from being homeless. The 1990 Census showed 14% of the Tempe population were living below poverty. About 21% of Tempe residents paid more than they can afford for their housing in 1995. *More efforts to prevent homelessness are essential.*”

Secondly, following is a very brief listing of some of the needed services mentioned during presentations to the Homeless Task Force by human service agency representatives:

Needs Identified by Presenters to the Homeless Task Force.

- More collaboration among agencies on services
- Services for post-released prisoners; take regional approach; Coordinate with Joint Legislative Committee; overnight shelter in Tempe
- More affordable housing
- Transportation – Dial-A-Ride type service needed; more outreach managers – follow up; case management
- Services for chronic addicts; more beds – restore to 98-99 levels; Continuum of Care – intensive case management
- Programs for batterers; more prevention programs in schools
- Respite shelter; outreach services
- Drop-in center with full continuum of services; more communication/ collaboration with Tempe PD; more drug/alcohol treatment centers
- Victim safety/batterer accountability; affordable housing
- Funding reductions – funding for seriously mentally ill; housing/case management
- Domestic violence – transitional housing/affordable housing
- More low demand detox shelter to prepare individuals for high demand shelter; services for re-released prisoners; increased life skills for homeless – don't give handouts
- Affordable housing; help for released felons
- Programs for battered women
- More \$\$\$; affordable health care; prevention programs
- More time, crews, vehicles for C.A.R.E. 7 - unmet medical services needs drain resources. C.A.R.E. 7 is being used to meet basic needs: food, shelter, clothing
- Training for officers/providers re: mentally ill homeless population; community guidance on how police should handle homeless
- More affordable housing
- More space for facility; day drop-in center – phone, shower, mail
- Addiction services
- More accessible health care; after-care monitoring
- Early intervention, full range of services with case management;
- Drop-in center
- Storage for food & perishable items
- Help with delivery of food – difficult and expensive
- Increase low demand shelter services as a part of a regional response
- Create low demand shelter in Tempe